Decline in the number of wild animals

*271. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that population of wild animals is continuously declining since last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have initiated any concrete step in this regard; and

(d) whether Government are also proposing to amend the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, with a view to take stern steps?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) There are no reports of continuous decline in the population of wild animals. Fluctuations in the population of wild animals is a natural phenomenon.

(c) It had been the constant endeavour of the Central and State Governments to develop the habitat of the wild animals so that a viable population of wild animals is maintained. Apart from the implementation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, India is also a signatory to many International Conventions aiming at the conservation of wild animals. Financial and technical assistance for habitat improvement, strengthening of infrastructure, communication systems, census, research, eco development, etc. are also provided for the conservation of wildlife under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes, "Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries", "Project Tiger" and "Project Elephant".

(d) Yes, Sir. An amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in this regard is now under consideration of the Parliament.

Increase in the prices of medicines

† *272. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the increase in percentage, witnessed in the prices of medicines during the last three financial years;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.